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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/757,813	01/15/2004	Donald C. Roe	7294C	5408

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EXAMINER

REICHLE, KARIN M

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3761

DATE MAILED: 02/06/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b> 10/757,813	<b>Applicant(s)</b> ROE ET AL.	
	<b>Examiner</b> Karin M. Reichle	<b>Art Unit</b> 3761	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

#### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 15 November 2005.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7,10-12 and 15-17 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7,10-12 and 15-17 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 15 January 2004 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)   | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                                   | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)             |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Specification***

The lengthy specification has not been checked to the extent necessary to determine the presence of all possible minor errors. Applicant's cooperation is requested in correcting any errors of which applicant may become aware in the specification.

For Example:

1. The amendments to the specification filed 11-15-05 are not entered as they are not in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121. For example the amendment to page 1 does not show all the changes made to the original text. For another example, Applicant has added a new paragraph to page 2, line 28 but has underlined such. The amendments bridging pages 43-44 and 44-45 can not be entered, e.g. Applicant needs to cancel the paragraph beginning on page 43 and enter a new paragraph on page 44. It is noted that trademarks should be shown by all capital letters or a symbol not both.

### ***Drawings***

2. The drawings are objected to because Figure 8 is not consistent with the description thereof on page 4, i.e. the Figure is shown in section but is not described as such. Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is

Art Unit: 3761

being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as “amended.” If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either “Replacement Sheet” or “New Sheet” pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

### *Description*

3. The use of the trademark PAMPERS(page 34, Table V) has been noted in this application. It should be capitalized wherever it appears and be accompanied by the generic terminology.

Although the use of trademarks is permissible in patent applications, the proprietary nature of the marks should be respected and every effort made to prevent their use in any manner which might adversely affect their validity as trademarks.

4. The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities: 1) On page 1, lines 10-12, the cross reference should be updated, i.e. the parent application has issued into a patent. Furthermore, where in the parent application is there support for the trade name bridging lines 25-26 of page 7, i.e. is this application a continuation or a continuation in part of the parent

Art Unit: 3761

application? 2) The Summary of the Invention section, i.e. a description of the claimed invention, and the invention of the claims should be commensurate, see MPEP 608.01(d). 3) On page 4 the description of Figure 8 is inconsistent with Figure 8 as shown, see also discussion supra. 4) On page 15, last line “accept” should be --“accept”--. 6) The equations bridging pages 43-44 and 44-45 should be amended to appear on one page rather than 2. 7) On page 45, line 17 and page 48, line 16 the underlining should be removed. 8) In claims 5 and 15, Applicant sets forth “a size” of the particle structure with dimensions of mm. However, it is unclear on page 27, last paragraph, what dimension of the particle this size is referring to, i.e. any dimension? A specific dimension? A clear description of the structure which has such size should be set forth. Note also the paragraph bridging pages 28-29.

Appropriate correction is required.

### ***Claim Language Interpretation***

5. The claim language is interpreted in light of the definitions set forth in the paragraph bridging pages 5-6. Any other claim terminology which has not been specifically defined will be interpreted in light of its broadest common definition. Therefore, in claims 1 and 10, it is claimed that the acceptance member is disposed “adjacent” to a bodyside surface of the backsheet. Since the term “adjacent” has not been specifically defined, the dictionary definition, i.e. “Close to, lying near”, will be applied. It is noted that the terminology “near” is considered relative. It is also noted claims 4 and 12 recite the element being a portion of the topsheet. Note page 21, line 18-page 22, line 3 of the instant specification. Therefore, an acceptance element anywhere on the article on the body side of the backsheet will be deemed to meet the

Art Unit: 3761

independent claims and an acceptance element forming a portion of the topsheet will be deemed to meet claims 4 and 12. Also in light of the discussion supra, with respect to the language “a size” in claims 5 and 15, such language will be considered to be met by any dimension of particulate structure of between about 1mm and about 10mm.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

6. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

7. Claims 1-7, 10-12 and 15-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Thompson et al ‘208, and thereby Thompson ‘135, Kimberly-Clark EP ‘417, Moore et al ‘642 and Lash et al ‘022.

Claim 1: See Claim Language Interpretation section supra and Thompson ‘208 at Figures, col. 5, lines 39-44, col. 7, line 57-col. 8, line 6, col. 14, line 41-col. 19, line 2, and thereby Thompson ‘135 at especially the Figures and the entire disclosure of EP ‘471, col. 9, line 54-col. 14, line 38, col. 21, line 30-col. 21, line 2, and thereby Moore ‘642 at col. 1, lines 46-62 and Lash et al ‘022 at col. 4, line 29-col. 6, line 35 and col. 14, lines 55-58 and 64 et seq, i.e. Thompson et al teaches a disposable absorbent article for wearing on or about a lower torso of a wearer for receiving bodily exudates which comprises a topsheet, e.g., 9, a backsheet, e.g., 12, joined with the topsheet, an absorbent core, e.g., at least a layer of 11, an acceptance element, i.e. at least a portion of the topsheet which comprises at least one aperture having an area of between 0.2 sq. mm to 25 sq. mm (See Thompson ‘208 at col. 15, line 61-col. 16, line 12 and the paragraph bridging cols. 18-19, i.e. EP ‘417 teaches filaments of a certain diameter, a topsheet

Art Unit: 3761

having a certain number of filaments per square inch to define openings of equal size therebetween, i.e. the area between the filaments per sq. inch calculated from such disclosed specifics includes apertures having an area as claimed), and a storage element, e.g., 10 or a layer of 11, between the acceptance element and the backsheet. Claim 1 further requires 1) the storage element to have a compressive resistance of at least about 70% and 2) the apertures have an effective aperture size of between about 0.2 sq. mm to about 25 sq. mm. With regard to 1), while Thompson '208 teaches a layer 10 having resilience and a ratio of wet to dry caliper of at least 80%, and preventing flow interference while being form fitting and a layer 11 of curled, twisted, chemically stiffened and crosslinked fibers, such fibers having increased dry resilience, i.e. the ability to return toward an expanded original state upon release of a compressional force applied thereto, and retaining their configuration during use at the portions cited supra, Thompson et al does not teach such layers having a "compression resistance" of at least about 70%. It is however noted that at page 29, lines 8-23 of the instant specification that Applicants while expressing the desire for the storage element to resist compression when a force is applied to maintain a significant level of storage capacity and restore itself to substantially its original thickness when the force is removed, does not disclose the criticality of the specific resistance claimed, i.e. the criticality of 70% rather than, for example, 45%. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to employ a compressive resistance of at least about 70% on the Thompson et al device since it has been held that where the general conditions of a claim are disclosed in the prior art as in the instant case, i.e. see discussion supra, it is not inventive to discover the optimum or workable ranges by routine experimentation. In re Aller, 105 USPQ 233. With regard to 2), see page 25, lines 2-5,

Art Unit: 3761

of the instant application, and thereby Roe '338. Furthermore, see again the portions of Thompson '208 and EP '417 cited supra, i.e. the topsheet of Thompson et al comprises at least one aperture having an area of between 0.2 sq. mm to 25 sq. mm, e.g. apertures of equal size of such area, for enhanced acceptance of fluid. Therefore, it is the Examiner's first position that there is sufficient factual evidence for one to conclude that the topsheet of Thompson '208 would necessarily and inevitably include the claimed "effective aperture size" when tested according to the test set forth in Roe '338. Alternatively, the Examiner's second position, Thompson '208 teaches a topsheet which receives or accepts fluid. It is however noted that while at page 23, lines 19-25 of the instant specification Applicants express the desire for the acceptance element to pass waste therethrough, the criticality of the specific effective aperture size claimed enabling the element to do so is not set forth, e.g. the criticality of 30 sq. mm rather than 25 sq mm for example has not been set forth. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to employ an effective aperture size as claimed on the Thompson et al device, if not already, since it has been held that where the general conditions of a claim are disclosed in the prior art as in the instant case, i.e. see discussion supra, it is not inventive to discover the optimum or workable ranges by routine experimentation. In re Aller, 105 USPQ 233.

Claims 3-4: See portions of Thompson '208 and '135 cited with respect to claim 1 supra.

Claims 5-6: See portions of Thompson '208 and Lash et al '022 cited with respect to claim 1 supra, i.e. layer 11 includes layers having absorbent particles of the claimed size.

Claims 5 and 7: See portions of Thompson '208 cited with respect to claim 1 supra, and paragraph bridging pages 28-29 of the instant application, i.e. layer 10 includes nonabsorbent,



fibers, i.e. particles, with wettable surfaces, i.e. liquid insensitive fibers, which fibers have a dimension of the size claimed. Note also the response to arguments, *infra*.

Claims 2 and 10-12 and 15-17: Applicant claims the acceptance element having an effective open area of at least 30%. However, see page 25, lines 2-5, of the instant application, and thereby Roe '338. Furthermore, see again the portions of Thompson '208 and EP '417 cited *supra*, i.e. the topsheet of Thompson et al includes an open area of 30-60% for enhanced acceptance of fluid. Therefore, it is the Examiner's first position that there is sufficient factual evidence for one to conclude that the topsheet of Thompson '208 would necessarily and inevitably include the claimed "effective open area" when tested according to the test set forth in Roe '338. Alternatively, the Examiner's second position, Thompson '208 teaches a topsheet which receives or accepts fluid. It is however noted that while at page 23, lines 8-13 of the instant specification Applicants express the desire for the acceptance element to pass waste therethrough, the criticality of the specific effective open area claimed enabling the element to do so is not set forth, e.g. the criticality of 30% rather than 28% for example has not been set forth. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to employ an effective open area of at least about 30 % on the Thompson et al device, if not already, since it has been held that where the general conditions of a claim are disclosed in the prior art as in the instant case, i.e. see discussion *supra*, it is not inventive to discover the optimum or workable ranges by routine experimentation. In re Aller, 105 USPQ 233.

### ***Response to Arguments***

8. Applicant's remarks with regard to the informalities and the double patenting rejections have been noted on pages 13-14 but are either deemed moot in that such issues have

Art Unit: 3761

not been reraised or are deemed not persuasive for the reasons set forth supra. With regard to the arguments with respect to the prior art, such arguments have been considered but are deemed not persuasive because they are not commensurate in scope with the disclosure, the claim language and the prior art teachings. Specifically with respect to the compressive resistance range of at least about 70%. As pointed out in the prior art rejection, while pages 29 and 45 discloses that the storage element should resist compression so as to be able to store, i.e. resist collapse, it does not disclose the criticality, as compared to a preference for, a compressive resistance of, e.g., at least about 70%. Applicant's remarks bridging pages 14-15 of the response are not commensurate in scope with the disclosure of the specification, e.g. the specification does not disclose the resistance should be at least about 50%, let alone at least 70%, only a preference therefor. Accordingly MPEP 2144.04 is not applicable as argued by Applicant since criticality of the specific limitation, i.e. at least about 70%, has not been demonstrated. On the other hand Thompson does teach a number properties which also suggest the desire to resist collapse even though the reference does not explicitly use the language "compressive resistance". However, In re Aller does not require such, i.e. "where the general conditions of a claim are disclosed". With regard to claims 5 and 7, see the Claim language Interpretation section supra and, e.g., '208 at col. 12, lines 50-60, i.e. the claim language does not require the dimension as argued by Applicant, i.e. depth, width of walls, has to be in the claimed range, i.e. can be any dimension, i.e. '208 teaches particles having a size in the claimed range.

***Conclusion***

9. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.


Any new grounds of rejection were necessitated by Applicant's amendments to claims 1-3, 5, 10-11 and 15.

10. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Karin M. Reichle whose telephone number is (571) 272-4936. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tanya Zalukaeva can be reached on (571) 272-1115. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Art Unit: 3761

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

  
Karin M. Reichle  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 3761

KMR  
January 31, 2006